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BOOK REVIEWS

Ethical Obligations of the Lawyer. By Gleason L. Archer, LL.B.,
Dean of the Suffolk School of Law. Little, Brown and Com-
pany, Boston. 1910. pp. 366.

The past decade has been unique in the history of the American bar. Never before has there been such a keen interest taken by lawyers in heightening and maintaining the morale of the profession of the law. Perhaps as a result of this movement, we have the present volume. It is to be hoped that Dean Archer's book will be the cause of increasing still more the interest of the bar in legal ethics.

The book is, of course, first of all idealistic in its tone. The subject of ethics is necessarily a subject of ideals. The ideal which seems most in the author's mind and which runs through the whole work is that of a great love for the profession of the law, as a profession. A lawyer should depend, not only on his personal notion of right and wrong, but also on the long established customs and traditions of the profession. A lawyer is bound never to do anything of questionable honesty, not only for the sake of his own honor, but for the sake of the honor of the profession. A member of the bar must do all that he can to prevent trickery in another, not only to save himself from the effects of that trickery, but also to maintain the honor of the profession. An attorney should never speak slightly of the profession even in jest, because such jests tend to lower the esteem in which the profession is held.

With all its idealism, however, the book is nevertheless exceedingly practical—so practical in fact that the detail into which it goes at times becomes wearisome to the ordinary reader. The book deals not only with the ethics of the profession, but in the course of the volume the author takes occasion to give much practical advice, directed particularly to the young lawyer, covering nearly every phase of legal practice outside of pleading, court work and substantive law. He treats among other things of the location of the law office, of a lawyer's duties to a client, to the adverse party, to other lawyers, to the courts and to the State. He indicates that, in his opinion, a lawyer of the present day

should devote himself to the business interests of the community rather more than to politics, and, finally, treats of a lawyer's liabilities to his client and grounds for disbarment.

Throughout the work, Mr. Archer quotes extensively from the *Canons of Ethics* of the American Bar Association, and Hoffman's *Fifty Resolutions in Regard to Professional Deportment*, and the full text of these is given in the appendix. The appendix also contains a schedule of legal fees adopted by "a prominent New England bar association."

E. A. I.

Life of Alexander Hamilton. By Allan McLane Hamilton.
Charles Scribner Sons, 1910. pp. 483.

The most striking feature of this, the latest work on the life of Alexander Hamilton, is the presence of a large number of original letters and documents written by Hamilton and various members of his family, as well as his contemporaries. Most of these writings are published here for the first time, having been left to the author by his father, the late Philip Hamilton, who was the youngest son of Alexander Hamilton.

It occurs to one who has studied law that the relation of this book to an ordinary biography might not inaptly be compared to the relation of a case book to a legal text book. To a person somewhat familiar with the life of Hamilton, it is intensely interesting to read the letters of this wonderful man, and draw inferences as to his views, ability and character. Just as a rule of law is more impressed on the mind when one reads a case in which it is applied, so the incidents and their real meaning in the life of Hamilton are brought clearly and forcibly to the mind of the reader in following the very words of the man and his contemporaries. Certainly the advantage of authenticity which a book of this kind must necessarily possess over one founded largely on personal opinion and doubtful data, should not be underestimated.

The extensive treatment of Hamilton, the lawyer, is particularly interesting to members of the legal profession. The prominent part that he took in the development of early law in the United States is such that no lawyer should be ignorant of his history. Every real student of law will derive both profit and pleasure in reading of this man's remarkable legal career.